

June
& July
2005

CROSSROADS

Vol. 12
Number 3

A Newsletter of the United States Embassy, Nigeria

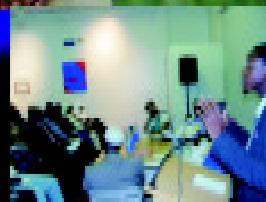
Trafficking in Persons:

Nigeria Scores an Upgrade

AGOA: Africa is Ready for Business



- How to Benefit from U.S. Government Grants
- New Embassy Building Opens in Abuja
- Lagos Conference Declares 'Jihad' on HIV/AIDS





U.S. Embassy Acting Deputy Chief of Mission Claudia Anyaso.

TIP is Modern Day Slavery

As usual, we have a full package of information for you in this issue of Crossroads that includes the Ambassador's address to the 2005 graduates of Babcock University. We also alert you to the upcoming meeting on the Africa Growth and Economic Opportunity Act (AGOA) meeting in

emerged in which 600,000 to 800,000 people are trafficked across international borders each year. Sexual exploitation, forced labor, child soldiers, and domestic servitude are all forms of this human trafficking. Trafficking takes place in every corner of the world.

In an effort to raise global awareness and encourage the efforts of other governments to counter trafficking in persons, the [US Department of State annually publishes a trafficking in persons report](#). On June 1, US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice released the fifth annual report that contained good news for Nigeria. In 2005, Nigeria made significant progress in its anti-trafficking efforts, particularly in regard to law enforcement. An important factor in that improvement was the 2003 Anti-Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP) law. NAPTIP investigated more than 40 cases of suspected trafficking, leading to eight new prosecutions. The High Court in Benin City handed down the first conviction under the 2003 anti-trafficking law. And there were many other successes. I encourage everyone to read this report, or portions of this report, at [\(website\)](#) to get a better understanding of this complex issue.❖

Senegal in July. HIV/AIDS issues continue to be on our radar screen. But I want to direct your attention to our cover story on trafficking in persons (TIP).

The world is all too familiar with the history of the trans-Atlantic slave trade that took captured Africans from their homes to slave markets in South and North America and the Caribbean. In the early 19th century, governments in these regions abolished this vile trade in humans for purposes of enslavement and human bondage. However a modern-day version of the slave trade, trafficking in persons (TIP), has

Quotable Quote

"The members of Enugu State American Graduate Organization wish to congratulate the government and people of the United States of America, on the occasion of their 229th Independence Anniversary."

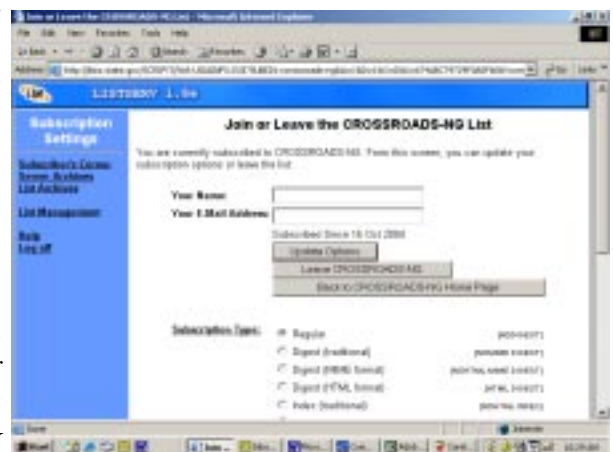
- J. O. UDEZE
Founder/President

Editor's letter To Crossroads Readers

DEAR CROSSROADS READERS,

We are still building our on-line access to an expanded version of [Crossroads](#). Our virtual community distribution list continues to grow by the day. Some of you have already subscribed to the list through your e-mail to the Editor of Crossroads. We have gone a step further by creating an easily accessible way for readers to directly join or leave our mailing list using the LISTSERV system. Simply access this link and enter your name and e-mail address into the LISTSERVE and you are on.

Please direct all enquiries to *The Editor* through e-mail at crossroads@state.gov



A Letter From Secretary Condoleezza Rice



U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice

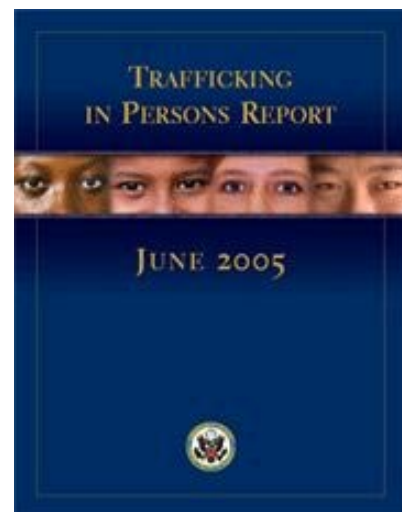
Dear Reader:

In his 2005 inaugural address, President Bush gave renewed voice to the hopes and dreams of people around the world who seek lives of freedom. He said, "America will not pretend that the jailed dissidents prefer their chains, or that women welcome humiliation and servitude, or that any human being aspires to live at the mercy of bullies." Yet for millions of people entrapped each year in vicious schemes of labor and sex trafficking, freedom is denied. These trafficking victims are deprived of their most basic human rights and fall into modern-day slavery. President Bush, the Congress, and the American people are united in efforts to eradicate trafficking in persons internationally and within national borders because this global crime opposes the universal value of freedom.

The fifth annual *Trafficking in Persons Report* (<http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2005/>), along with the \$96 million in anti-trafficking assistance our nation provided to foreign governments and non-government organizations last year, demonstrates our strong commitment to this cause. This year, we included more country analyses as a result of deeper research and a wider range of sources. We also expanded our coverage of labor slavery, especially internal labor trafficking. Forced labor and involuntary servitude are appallingly common, including whole villages working to pay off old debts passed down through generations.

The *TIP Report* serves to expose these despicable aspects of trafficking. It provokes, lauds, and challenges. Countries including the United States, which is dealing with its own trafficking problem, have been inspired to greater action against human trafficking as a result of this unique compendium. By reading it, we hope you are joining with us in the abolitionist movement of the 21st century to advance freedom for the world's most vulnerable citizens.❖

Full text of the *TIP Report* @ <http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2005/>





Nigerian female deportees from Italy. Nigerian girls and women are trafficked for forced prostitution to Italy, France, Spain, the Netherlands, Cote d'Ivoire, and South Africa.

U.S. Commends Nigeria for Efforts Against Trafficking in Persons

On Friday, June 3, 2005 U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice released the fifth annual Department of State Trafficking in Persons Report. The 150-country report is the most comprehensive worldwide report on the efforts of governments to combat severe forms of trafficking in persons or modern-day slavery. Its findings will raise global awareness and spur countries to take effective actions to counter trafficking in persons.

The 2005 report contains good news for Nigeria. Nigeria demonstrated significant progress in its anti-trafficking efforts, particularly in regard to law enforcement. Nigeria has therefore been upgraded from the Tier 2 Watch List, to the Tier 2 List.

We commend the federal government and all the state governments, organizations, and individuals who have worked to fight the scourge of trafficking. Continued improvement in all three areas of

protection, prosecution, and prevention will be important in the coming year to move forward on combating trafficking and to help Nigeria improve its ranking even further.

Nigeria has shown clear progress over the past year in implementing the 2003 Anti-Trafficking in Persons law. The Nigerian Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP) investigated more than 40 cases suspected of complicity in the trafficking of persons, leading to eight new prosecutions. In November, the High Court in Benin City handed down the first conviction under the 2003 anti-trafficking law. NAPTIP also began investigating a number of law enforcement officials suspected of trafficking complicity. The police anti-trafficking unit rescued 35 victims of trafficking, opened 27 investigations, and arrested 40 suspected traffickers.

Other areas of clear progress cited by the report include increased gov-

ernment assistance to victims. For example, NAPTIP operates two shelters for victims in Lagos and Benin. The Nigerian Government has also published a brochure which is distributed to victims of trafficking returning from Europe, outlining the steps they can take to facilitate prosecutions. NAPTIP conducted "sensitization tours" around the country, reaching out to state governments, local law enforcement, market organizations and youth groups to raise awareness of the dangers of trafficking. Additionally, many state governments supported trafficking prevention efforts. Several nongovernmental organizations also assisted victims by providing counseling, vocational, and other services.

The U.S. Government is proud to have partnered with Nigeria in the fight against trafficking in persons. Our agency for international development ([USAID](#)) helped the Ministry of Education conduct awareness campaigns in 17 schools,

reaching 20,000 students. We provided funds to refurbish the victims' shelter in Lagos. Over the next several years, we hope to continue supporting victims, raising public awareness and supporting NAPTIP and the police to improve their capacity to investigate and prosecute traffickers.

However, Nigeria remains a source, transit and destination country for trafficking women and children. Nigerians are trafficked to Europe, the Middle East and other countries in Africa for the purpose of sexual exploitation, forced labor, and domestic servitude. Within Nigeria, children are trafficked for exploitation as domestic servants and other forced labor.

The U.S. Government is committed to continuing our joint efforts with Nigeria to combat the global problem of trafficking in persons. We again congratulate the federal government, NGOs, the



Ambassador Campbell making remarks at a press briefing on the release of the Fifth Annual Trafficking in Persons Report in Abuja.

police services, and state governments on the real progress registered last year. We urge the Government of Nigeria to build on these successes

and redouble its efforts to prosecute suspected traffickers, assist victims, and raise awareness of the dangers of trafficking.❖

Effective Strategies in Combating Trafficking

To be effective, anti-trafficking strategies must target both the supply side, the traffickers — and the demand side — the owners or, in the case of trafficking for sexual exploitation, the sex consumers — of this ugly phenomenon.

On the **supply** side, the conditions that drive trafficking must be dealt with through programs that alert communities to the dangers of trafficking, improve and expand educational and economic opportunities to vulnerable groups, promote equal access to education, educate people regarding their legal rights, and create better and broader life opportunities.

Regarding **traffickers**, law enforcement must vigorously prosecute traffickers and those who aid

and abet them; fight public corruption which facilitates and profits from the trade; identify and interdict trafficking routes through better intelligence gathering and coordination; clarify legal definitions of trafficking and coordinate law enforcement responsibilities; and train personnel to identify and direct trafficking victims to appropriate care.

On the **demand** side, those who exploit trafficked persons must be identified and prosecuted. Employers of forced labor and exploiters of victims trafficked for sexual exploitation must be named and shamed. With regard to sex slavery, awareness-raising campaigns must be conducted in destination countries to make it harder for trafficking to be concealed or ignored. Victims must be rescued from slave-like living and

working situations, rehabilitated, and reintegrated into their families and communities. Anti-trafficking strategies and programs developed with input from stakeholders (civil society and NGOs) are the most effective and likely to succeed as they bring a comprehensive view to the problem.

Coordination and cooperation —whether national, bilateral, or regional—will leverage country efforts and help rationalize the allocation of resources. Nations should cooperate more closely to deny traffickers legal sanctuary and facilitate their extradition for prosecution. Such cooperation should also aim to facilitate the voluntary and humane repatriation of victims.❖

<http://www.state.gov/g/tip>

Public Health Implications of Trafficking:

The Link Between Spread of HIV and Trafficking in Persons

Besides being a criminal and human rights issue, human trafficking has serious public health effects. Victims of trafficking often endure brutal conditions that result in physical, sexual, and psychological trauma. The health risks and consequences include sexually transmitted diseases, pelvic inflammatory disease, hepatitis, tuberculosis and other communicable diseases; unwanted pregnancy, forced abortion, and abortion-related complications; rape and other physical assault; a host of mental and emotional health problems including nightmares, insomnia, and suicidal tendencies; alcohol and drug abuse and addiction; and even suicide and murder. The health implications of sex trafficking extend not only to its victims, but also to the general public, as well as those who frequent brothels and who can become carriers and/or core transmitters of serious diseases.

The Link Between HIV/AIDS and TIP

Approximately 42 million people are living with HIV/AIDS worldwide. This global epidemic affects women and children who are trafficked for purposes of prostitution. Globally, women in prostitution and those who have been trafficked for prostitution have a high prevalence of HIV and other STDs. For example:

- * In Nepal, HIV prevalence among women in prostitution is 20 percent.
- * In South Africa it is 70.4 percent.
- * In Cambodia, 28.8 percent of women in prostitution are HIV infected.
- * In Zambia, where there is a thriving sex trade, there is a 31 percent



HIV prevalence in red light areas

In India, scientists have noted high levels of prostitution along trade routes in the Northeast, with associated high levels of HIV in those areas.

In addition, the HIV/AIDS epidemic may be spread by human trafficking. Some experts have linked sex trafficking to the spread and mutation of the virus. They believe that sex trafficking is aiding the global dispersion of HIV subtypes.

What Is the United States Doing?

Because the U.S. Government believes there is a link between trafficking in persons and HIV/AIDS as well as other serious communicable diseases, it has developed programs to address both TIP and HIV/AIDS.

These include:

- * Cooperative efforts with the President's Emergency Program for AIDS Relief. This strategy focuses on prevention, treatment, and care for those infected with or affected by HIV/AIDS. We have worked to add rescue and rehabilitation efforts for victims of sex trafficking to the overall strategy.
- * Participation in training health workers and health professionals at

national and international HIV/AIDS events to ensure that sex trafficking is discussed.

* Hosting the first conference on the public health implications of trafficking in persons, to bring together over 100 doctors, nurses, and medical practitioners to discuss prevention, treatment, and services.

* Meeting with representatives from the American Medical Association, the Christian Medical Association, and other health professional associations to plan programs and curricula to educate health professionals about the health implications of trafficking in persons.

For the Future: Prevention

Both HIV/AIDS experts and anti-trafficking advocates agree on one thing: rehabilitative treatment of a trafficking victim and/or palliative treatment for HIV/AIDS, while desirable, does not allow us to get ahead of the problem. In addressing the link between human trafficking and HIV/AIDS, it is clear that we will need to step up preventive programs, for only when we prevent trafficking, and prevent the spread of the HIV/AIDS epidemic, will we truly be successful. ♦

Message By President George Bush to the People of Africa

For the past several years, the United States has worked with African leaders on bold initiatives to encourage reform within the continent. Our goal is improve the lives of the African people, and our partnership is yielding results. The economies of many African nations are growing. And in sub-Saharan Africa as a whole, economic growth is now at its highest level in eight years.

The growth of your economies has been helped by strong trade ties between our continents. Last year I signed the African Growth and Opportunity Acceleration Act, which will continue to reduce barriers to trade, increase exports, create jobs, and expand opportunity for Africans and Americans alike. This agreement is giving American businesses greater confidence to invest in Africa. It also encourages African nations to reform their economies. And the law is producing results: last year, U.S. exports to sub-Saharan Africa increased 25 percent - and America's imports from [AGOA](#) countries rose 88 percent.

This success reflects the growing consensus in both Africa and the United States that open trade and international investment are the surest and fastest ways for Africa to make progress. AGOA nations are strengthening the rule of law. They are lowering trade barriers. They are combating corruption, protecting workers, and eliminating child labor. They are setting an important example for the entire continent - demonstrating that governments that respect individual rights and encourage the development of their markets are more likely to grow economically and achieve political



President George Bush.

stability.

As we increase trade, we are also reforming the way we deliver aid.

For too many years, our assistance to Africa was sent without regard to results. Under my Administration, U.S. development aid to African nations has increased, but we are not just giving more aid - we are being wiser about how it is spent.

The idea is based on common sense: aid works best in countries that are proving their commitment to govern justly, respect the rule of law, invest in their citizens, and open up their economies. When nations do these things and expand freedom and opportunities to all their citizens, entire societies can be lifted out of

poverty and despair. In 2002, we launched the [Millennium Challenge Account](#) to provide aid to poorer nations based on these principles. In April, Madagascar became the first country to sign a Compact with the Millennium Challenge Corporation - and I am confident that other African nations will follow.

At a time when freedom is on the march around the world, it is vital that the continent of Africa be a place of democracy and prosperity and hope, where people grow up healthy and have the opportunity to realize their dreams. Africa is a continent of promise, and the United States wants to help the people of Africa realize the brighter future they deserve.❖

AGOA Has Proven It's Value to Africa



The fourth U.S.-sub-Saharan Africa Trade and Economic Cooperation Forum was held in Dakar, Senegal, July 18-20, 2005. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice led the U.S. delegation to the Forum, accompanied by U.S. Department of Agriculture Secretary Mike Johanns, U.S. Agency for International Development Administrator Andrew Natsios and other senior U.S. officials.

The Government of Senegal graciously co-hosted the dynamic event, which brought together senior U.S. administration officials, African government ministers and hundreds of U.S. and African business and civil society stakeholders to accelerate the exchange of ideas and information critical to AGOA's continued success.

The theme for the 2005 Forum was "Expanding and Diversifying Trade to Promote Growth and Competitiveness." This high-level meeting dealt with how to foster greater interest and investment in AGOA. It also provided practical information about how to meet U.S. export requirements to successfully enter U.S. markets.

The Forum consisted of parallel meetings: a ministerial-level meeting between the U.S. and the governments of the 37 AGOA-eligible countries, a meeting between the U.S. and African private sectors, and a meeting of civil

society organizations from the U.S. and Africa.

Here in Nigeria, and before the Dakar meeting, the Special Adviser to the Nigerian President on Export Program and Chief Executive Officer of the Nigerian Export Promotion Council, Mrs. Gladys Modupe Sasore, and the U.S. Embassy's Senior Economic Officer, Lawrence Walker, briefed the press on Nigeria's response to African Growth and Opportunity Act" (AGOA) opportunities, especially in the face of phenomenal successes recorded by other African countries.

Mrs. Sasore told the media at the briefing that, although Nigeria's achievements may not be described as impressive, her office has embarked on an extensive sensitization program, which has encouraged the development and emergence of small and medium enterprises. Mrs. Sasore said that there are some implementation difficulties in Nigeria as a result of the tough import product standards of the US. She said, however, that despite the difficulties, the Nigerian Export Promotion Council is working assiduously on marketing made-in-Nigeria textile products – yarn and fabric mainly – to apparel producers exporting to the U.S. in other AGOA-eligible Sub-Saharan African countries that export to the U.S.

Mr. Walker, the Embassy's Senior Economic Officer, said the Nigerian concerns had been noted and would be looked into, and he encouraged Mrs. Sasore to raise these matters at the Dakar Forum. As a result of this, Mrs. Sasore later met with USAID Country Director Pat Fleuret, who took note of her concerns and sent them back to Washington to prepare senior USAID officials for meetings in Dakar with Mrs. Sasore.

Mr. Walker provided an overview of AGOA, noting that AGOA allows most products with 50% value-added in AGOA-eligible countries to enter the United States duty free. "AGOA has been a success," he said. "AGOA exports to the US totaled \$26.6 billion in 2004, up by 88% over 2003. Non-oil AGOA exports in 2004 were \$3.5 billion, up by 22% over 2003."

He said exports in the apparel and agricultural sectors are two sensitive trade areas, but they are now open with the help of AGOA. For these reasons, Mr. Walker said, "AGOA has proven its value."❖

Bi-lateral Trade Overview (U.S.-Nigeria)

Nigeria is the largest trade partner (in terms of value of trade) of the U.S. in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), with total trade increasing rapidly in recent years. In 2001, Nigeria recorded a trade surplus well in excess of \$ 7 billion with the United States, although this decreased to \$ 4.9 billion in 2002. This far exceeds the trade surplus recorded by South Africa, being the country with the next largest trade surplus with the US. Of all SSA

countries, however, exports are not very diversified, and are concentrated in energy-related products (mainly oil and natural gas).

Exports eligible under the provisions of AGOA amounted to almost \$ 5.4 billion in 2002 (2001: \$ 5.6 billion). This profile is similar to the trade profile of the 3rd largest exporter under AGOA (Gabon), whereas the 2nd largest exporting country under AGOA (South Africa) indicates a highly diversi-



fied trade base.

The make-up of Nigeria's AGOA-eligible exports in 2002 appear to closely resemble that of 2001, and consist almost entirely of energy-related output. There is indeed need for diversification.❖

■ <http://www.AGOA.info> ■

How to Make U.S. Grants Work for You

By Idika U. Onyukwu
Editor Crossroads

In spite of today's harsh economic realities, U.S. Ambassador to Nigeria John Campbell says any youth can utilize several U.S. Government funded small and medium scale grants to change and influence the future of employment in Nigeria. Campbell was the guest speaker on June 5 at the third graduation ceremony of Nigeria's first private university – Babcock located in Ilisan Remo, Ogun State.

Campbell's remarks come at a time when the 2005 International Labor Organization report on Nigeria shows that urban unemployment is acute with the attendant high levels of crime and socio-political problems.

To get started, Ambassador Campbell introduced the audience to PRISMS. The acronym stands for Promoting Improved Sustainable Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise Services. PRISMS is a U.S. Government funded program designed to work with commercial banks to facilitate lending to micro, small and medium enterprises through micro-finance institutions. For example, PRISMS works with big banks to get them to lend to small, local credit institutions. These, in turn, make very small loans, as small as fifty thousand naira, to local people so that they can start their own business. Currently, PRISMS is working to facilitate additional financing for "Lift Above Poverty," a micro-finance institution in Benin City, that lends to micro, small and medium enterprises in various sectors. Lift Above Poverty has thirty branches across the country and over 30,000 clients.

Campbell said the U.S. Government is also providing assistance to Nigerian youth through the JOBS

program. JOBS has offices in Kano and Calabar and trains youth in basic business management, life skills development, micro-enterprise development and computer skills. The project has collaborated with PRISMS to provide start-up capital to the JOBS program graduates through a micro-finance institution in Kano.

The United States has also opened six community resource centers in the six geopolitical zones of the country. The resource centers are located in Abuja, Kaduna, Bauchi, Abeokuta, Enugu, and Calabar. "The facilities are designed to assist the Nigerian people, especially students, graduates, youth and small business owners to acquire computer skills, to access the Internet and to locate opportunities to enhance their personal life as well as opportunities for small business ventures," Campbell said.

The Ambassador also called attention to another U.S. program designed to encourage private enterprise - the Africa Growth and Opportunity Act - commonly referred to as AGOA. Thanks to the special access to United States markets provided by AGOA, U.S. barriers to imports from Africa, including Nigeria, are among the lowest in the world," he said. In 2004, over 98% of the imports from AGOA-eligible countries entered the U.S. duty free. AGOA has also helped to spark an increase in two-way United States - Africa trade. Especially noteworthy for Nigeria is the increase of non-traditional and value added African products, such as apparel and agricultural goods, though much more activity in this area is needed.

The U.S. also runs two programs in Nigeria through USAID designed to help companies take advantage of AGOA. They are MARKETS, a program designed to help companies to improve the competitiveness of manu-

factured goods and promote trade linkages and REFORMS, which promotes improved policies to remove constraints to agricultural productivity, processing and commercialization. Within the next five years the MARKETS and REFORMS programs plan to work with five hundred thousand clients, including small-scale farmers, micro-entrepreneurs, traders and others, to create one hundred thousand new jobs and generate or leverage two hundred and thirty million dollars in revenue for their Nigerian clients. These are all activities that provide employment outside the over-burdened public sector.

"With the benefits of AGOA and the MARKETS and REFORMS programs, the small business training through JOBS, and PRISMS micro lending program, the enterprising graduate could not only do well for himself or herself but could also create jobs and opportunities for others in their community," Ambassador Campbell added.

On the opportunities available with the U.S.-Nigeria HIV/AIDS program, Campbell said "it would be remiss of me not to mention the contributions of PEPFAR, President Bush's Emergency Plan to respond to the HIV/AIDS pandemic in Nigeria. The Ambassador noted that over a four year period, the U.S. will be contributing more than half a billion dollars to this effort in Nigeria alone. The PEPFAR program is currently funding seventeen universities across the six geographical regions of Nigeria. These universities have recently been allocated a grant of \$200,000 to assist them in enhancing their institutional capacities to design and initiate community specific programs that would help to address the issue of HIV/AIDS on their campuses and in their host communities."

■ <http://nigeria.usembassy.gov/> ■

U.S. is Committed to Africa's Prosperity

President Bush and Presidents Mogae, Kufour, Pohamba, Tandja and Guebuza recently announced that the fourth African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) Forum will take place in Dakar, Senegal July 18th to 20th. President Abdoulaye Wade of Senegal has graciously agreed to join the United States in co-hosting the 2005 AGOA Forum. AGOA is a tangible symbol of the United States' commitment to support actions, in partnership with Africans, that generate growth and lasting development. Secretary Rice plans to be in Dakar and will underscore our continued efforts to promote democracy and prosperity in the region.

By increasing trade, AGOA is creating economic growth and decreasing poverty. Due to AGOA preferences, 98 percent of all goods from Africa enter the U.S. duty-free. AGOA imports from Sub-Saharan Africa increased 88 percent between 2003 and 2004, to \$26.6 billion. Non-oil imports such as automobiles and agricultural goods were \$3.5 billion, up 22 percent over the same period.

African countries can unleash even more new trade and investment opportunities by reducing tariffs within the region, improving the business climate and accelerating regional cooperation. In creating the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), Africa's leaders committed to sound economic management,

opening their economies, and boosting investment. They pledged to promote sustainable development, transparency, democratic institutions and a legal and regulatory framework that supports private enterprise and innovation. We can already see tangible results.

African leaders are taking important steps to further accelerate economic growth by driving down the cost and risk of doing business, and creating legal and financial systems that support a stable environment for job creation and a thriving private sector. Madagascar, Benin, Kenya, Mozambique and Namibia, for example, are implementing reforms to encourage private investment.❖

U.S. Scholars Share Research Experiences on Nigerian Culture

For three days June 13-15, and at three different venues U.S. Fulbright Scholars Dr. Jamaine Abidogun and Dan Hoyle spoke to an audience of more than 500 people in Abeokuta, Lagos and Ibadan on cross-cultural issues using their Fulbright experiences in Nigeria. With her interdisciplinary background that incorporates culture and education, Dr. Abidogun, discussed gender role changes due to western education. The Fulbright scholar said while Western education has benefited the men, women were still not better off. She discussed the results of her research on education and gender issues with secondary school students in Nssukka, a city in the Eastern part of Nigeria. Initial findings show that while male students acquired new status and privileges in society, their female counter-



(L-r), Dan Hoyle, Jamaine Abidogun, Lady Jibowu and Winifred Nwaefido at a seminar on "Gender Role Changes" in Ibadan on June 15.

parts did not fare better. Dr. Abidogun suggested a reappraisal of the Nigerian school curriculum. She also advised that some aspects of culture should be incorporated into every level of the school curriculum. "Western education should not mean jettisoning healthy traditional cultures that promote better understanding of the people's way of life," she said. Dr. Abidogun recently won a Fulbright Scholar award to conduct research on education and gender issues in Nigeria for the 2004-2005 academic year.

Ms. Winifred Nwaefido, a second year undergraduate student of the University of Nigeria Nsukka assisted Dr. Abidogun in the research and traveled with her throughout the trip.

Dan Hoyle used drama to compare the different ways youth in an industrial society and in a local village would make use of the Internet. In an industrial society the youth would use the internet to create employment for himself and even others. In a local village, due to poor and inadequate facilities this cannot be done. Dan is an actor and writer and presently studying how to use entertainment to lighten the economic burden of the conflict in the Niger Delta area of Nigeria.❖

Nigerians Join Americans to Celebrate U.S. 229 Independence Anniversary

Four State Governors - James Ibori (Delta), Orji Kalu (Abia), Gbenga Daniel (Ogun), Chief Diepreye Alamieyeseigha (Balyesa) and Lagos State Deputy Governor Femi Pedro, were among the more than 500 guests who joined Ambassador John Campbell to celebrate the 229th Independence Anniversary of the United States on Saturday, July 2 in Lagos. In his remarks, Ambassador Campbell said the ties that bound Nigeria and the United States throughout the intervening years remain vibrant and federalism has been a unifying factor between both countries. Independence Day Campbell said, "is a time to recall and take pride in our nation's ideals of democracy, liberty, equality before the law and the pursuit of free enterprise which symbolizes the best of America's aspirations." Below are some of the photos of the evening as captured by **Cornelius Oiku** for **Crossroads**. ■ <http://nigeria.usembassy.gov/> ■



Photos: Top, Ambassador Campbell welcomes Governor Gbenga Daniel and his wife Funke.

Middle: Governors Gbenga Daniel, Diepreye Alamieyeseigha and James Ibori share a banter.

Bottom: Guests at the receiving line (l), and U.S. Marines on Color Parade(r).



Lagos Conference Declares "Jihad" on HIV/AIDS

By Idika U. Onyukwu
Editor Crossroads

No fewer than 100 people comprising Muslim clerics, scholars, students, People Living with HIV (PLWH) and members of organizations dealing with HIV/AIDS, participated in a roundtable on **"Muslims and the Challenges of HIV/AIDS"** jointly organized by the Public Affairs Section of the U.S. Consulate in Lagos and Lagos-based Muslim Against AIDS (MAIDS) on June 16. Speakers at the roundtable were Dr. Ahmad Sa'eid, a medical doctor and HIV/AIDS counselor, Dr. Saheed Timehin, a lecturer of Islamic affairs at the Lagos State University, and Mr. Ibrahim Umoru, a Muslim living positively with HIV.

Using the holy Koran as a platform, Dr. Ahmad Sa'eid said Islam enjoins all faithful to be concerned about their health. He set the ball rolling with some hard facts. Case one: Dr. Sa'eid said if Muslims are assumed to constitute 60% of



Muslim Cleric Dr. Ahmad Sa'eid making his remarks at a roundtable on "Muslims and the Challenges of HIV/AIDS" on June 16, in Lagos.

Nigeria's more than 120 Million people, it means Muslims alone account for about 7 million of all the HIV/AIDS cases in Nigeria. Nigeria has an HIV/AIDS adult prevalence rate of 5.8%. Not finished with that, Dr. Ahmed also said if the number of children whose parents have died due to HIV/AIDS stand at 1 million, then Muslim faithfuls alone account for 700,000 of these children. The

Cleric said the current situation calls for great concern among Muslims and cannot be allowed to continue. He challenged all to act collectively against HIV/AIDS.

Speaking from the point of a person living positively with the HIV/AIDS virus, Ibrahim Umoru emphasized acceptance of those affected as contained in the Holy Koran instead of stigmatizing them.

Umoru educated participants on the differences between living with HIV and the onset of AIDS, saying that one can live positively with the virus without falling sick as long as one takes good care of his or herself. He encouraged the audience to test their HIV status and encouraged any positive person to guard against spreading the virus.

Other speakers included Professor Is'aq Akintola, Coordinator and National President Muslims Against HIV/AIDS and Ms. Philomina Anierobi, Society for Family Health. The Secretary General of Supreme Council of Islam in Nigeria, Alhaji Lateef Adegbite was represented at the event.❖



A participant at the round-table discussion on HIV/AIDS, making her remarks on the challenges of HIV/AIDS, June 16.

Pat Fleuret is New USAID Director in Nigeria

On Friday June 3, U.S. Ambassador John Campbell administered the oath of office to Patrick Fleuret as the new United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Director in Nigeria. Fleuret replaces Dawn Liberi.

Fleuret brings over 25 years of experience in Africa with him to Nigeria. His background uniquely qualifies him for the economic challenges in Nigeria.



USAID Nigeria Director Patrick Fleuret takes the oath of office while his wife Anne holds the Bible.

<http://www.usaid.gov/ng/>

In Tanzania he was a project development officer, running programs in rural roads, railroad rehabilitation, financial sector development and private enterprise development.

In Uganda he served as Deputy Mission Director along side his well respected predecessor, Dawn Liberi.

Fleuret also spent two years in Botswana as Mission Director for the Regional Center for Southern Africa.

There he provided business and technical support services to eight USAID bilateral missions in southern African, as well as Embassies in Botswana, Lesotho, and Swaziland.

Not only does Fleuret bring with him an excellent background but he is also joining his wife, Anne, who has been living in Nigeria as the USAID strategic planning adviser for the last two and a half years.

Campbell said Fleuret was coming to Nigeria at a critical time when the country is faced with numerous challenges to its fledgling democracy such as HIV/AIDS, poverty, weak political and economic institutions.❖

Art in the Embassies Highlights the Importance of the Environment

By Sani Mohammed
Public Affairs Section, Abuja

The commemoration of “World Environment Day” on June 5 affords us an opportunity to reflect on the role of art in the environment and on the artists whose works helps illuminate our understanding of nature.

Ambassador John Campbell chose the environment as the theme for the art exhibition in his residence in Abuja, Nigeria that was provided through the U.S. State Department “ART in Embassies” Program.

Through the ART in Embassies program, thousands of artists, galleries and museums across the United States have lent paintings, sculptures and other original works of art to U.S. Embassies for exhibition in ambassadorial residences.

“Nigeria, like the United States, is a huge country with a wide range of ecosystems. Nigerians, like their American friends, are increasingly concerned about preserving and restoring their natural landscapes, especially the animals that inhabit them,” Ambassador Campbell wrote in his welcome note on the ART in Embassies Program brochure.

The careful selection and arrangement of the Art works that decorate Ambassador Campbell’s residence invokes awe and depicts the harmony between art and nature in our lives.

The art of five contemporary U.S. artists was chosen by Ambassador Campbell to represent North American natural landscapes. The five artists, Dozier Bell (1957), Doug Coffin (1946), Karl J. Kuerner 111 (1957), Susan Middleton (1948)/ David Liittschwager (1961), and Donald Neff (12950) have all generously lent their art for exhibition in the Ambassador’s residence.❖

American Corner Opens at Bola Ige Center, Abuja



IRC Director, Elizabeth Akinbulumo explains the new Bola Ige American Corner collections to Ambassador Campbell and Dr. Safiya Mohammed, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Women Affairs.

By Musa Mohammed
Public Affairs Section, Abuja

United States Ambassador to Nigeria John Campbell says Nigeria is uniquely poised to bridge the technological divide between advanced nations and developing countries. Ambassador Campbell who spoke at the ribbon cutting ceremony for a new American Corner at the Bola Ige Information Technology Center, Abuja added that the Government of the United States is equally committed to assisting Nigeria to take its rightful place in the

technological world environment.

Ambassador Campbell was joined at the commissioning by the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Women Affairs, Dr Safiya Mohammed who represented the Minister of Women Affairs, Obong Rita Akpan. The Ambassador stated that in a vastly expanding age of information technology, no country can afford to be left behind because of the tremendous opportunity it holds for the growth of democratic concepts and values. He described American Corners as “partnership between the United States and

Nigeria, which also serve to bridge cultural barriers through technology-based programs.”

The American Corner is a joint cultural center which provides educational and reference materials with poster exhibits. It is also a venue for speakers and local alumni group meetings and a forum for interacting with civil society and grass roots organizations.

Speaking specifically on the American Corner in the Bola Ige Center, Ambassador Campbell said it “provides excellent synergy between two facilities ... the information being shared in this combined space is not only about the United States, but also about Nigeria.”

Ambassador Campbell emphasized that all of the 10 American Corners located in Abuja, Bauchi, Jos, Kaduna and Kano in the North and the ones in Abeokuta, Calabar, Enugu, Ibadan and Port Harcourt in the South are run by Nigerian staff.

Dr. Safiya Mohammed who delivered the Women Affairs Minister’s speech said that, “the American Corner represents a bridge between two great countries which although separated by distance are bonded together by friendship in the ever-shrinking global community.” She expressed the hope that the American Corners across the country will continue to galvanize the U.S. – Nigeria bond of friendship.❖

<http://nigeria.usembassy.gov/>

Our American Experience

Sixteen Nigerian participants in the Department of State-sponsored Youth Exchange Study (YES) program returned to Nigeria and participated in a press briefing on Thursday, June 9. They said the program has opened their eyes to the real America. The students mostly Muslims from Kaduna and Sokoto States in northern Nigeria, told the media that contrary to what they were told or taught about America before their trip, Americans are compassionate, sensitive to other peoples concerns and committed to good education. The YES program is sponsored with a \$300,000 grant from the U.S. Department of State.❖



Aminu Usman Jibrila narrating his American experience while a cross section of returned Nigerian YES students listen.

Africa's First Blood Transfusion Center Opens in Abuja

In a critically needed step in the fight against the spread of HIV/AIDS in Nigeria, President Olusegun Obasanjo, on May 12, participated in the ribbon cutting for the Grand Opening of the Abuja Blood Transfusion Center, a USAID-funded center. The Center is to serve as the centerpiece for the rebuilding of the Nigerian National Blood Transfusion Service. He was joined by Jeffrey Busch, Chairman and CEO of Safe Blood for Africa, U.S. Ambassador John F. Campbell, USAID Deputy Mission Director, Natalie Freeman and other officials at the center located at Plot 1208 Idofian close, Off Nairobi Crescent, Wuse 2, Abuja.

The Center built in cooperation with Safe Blood for Africa Foundation is critically needed to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS through infected blood.

Jeff Busch, founder and Chairman of Safe Blood International Foundation, expressed his gratitude to President Obasanjo for his commitment and leadership. He was joined by U.S. Government and ExxonMobil officials who are partnering in the Transfusion Center project. Under the guidance of the Nigerian Ministry of Health, the Center's goals include reducing the risk of spreading HIV/AIDS through



President Olusegun Obasanjo donating blood at the opening of the Abuja blood transfusion Center on May 12.

blood transfusions by changing how blood is donated, revamping blood banks and hospital transfusion software, and increasing the supply of "safe blood" throughout Nigeria. This could be accomplished by eliminating contaminated blood through improved testing, training and quality control.

Safe Blood for Africa Foundation, a part of the Safe Blood International Foundation, has recruited and trained a network of blood testing scientists, blood collection experts and donor recruitment specialists to support the

safe collection, testing and distribution of blood and blood products. Working side-by-side with the Ministry of Health, Safe Blood for Africa Foundation has provided technical assistance in formulating a plan to deal with the epidemic and has joined with Nigerian medical professionals to implement the plan.

The Abuja demonstration project is a unique collaborative effort that includes the Safe Blood for Africa Foundation, the Federal Ministry of Health, the United States Agency for International Development, and ExxonMobil. These organizations all work together to support the demonstration site that will serve as a model for establishing a safe and plentiful supply of blood throughout Nigeria. In a related project, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention are collaborating with the Nigerian Ministry of Health and the Safe Blood for Africa Foundation to strengthen six additional blood transfusion centers in the six geopolitical zones in Nigeria.❖

<http://www.safebloodforafrica.org/>



Ambassador Campbell greets President Obasanjo on arrival at the venue of the ribbon cutting ceremony.



Detroit Islamic Center Opens Largest Mosque in United States

*By Brittany Sterrett
Washing FileStaff Writer*

Fifteen years of planning, six years of building and \$15 million went into the creation of a new Detroit mosque that now ranks as the largest mosque in the United States. The two-story building has room for more than 1,000 people in the main prayer hall and over 2,000 in the banquet hall.

The mosque, which opened on May 27, is part of the Islamic Center of America (ICA), an organization founded in 1961 and currently under the leadership of Imam Sayed Hassan al-Qazwini.

Imam Qazwini, who was born in Karbala, Iraq, and studied Islamic jurisprudence in Qum, Iran, came to the United States more than 12 years ago. He says he has been “impressed on how diverse this country is and how Muslims are thriving in this country.” He was attracted to Michigan because of its large concentration of Muslims and now feels at home in what he

refers to as the “American Middle East.”

As the imam of a mosque in such a large and influential Muslim community, Qazwini hopes to affect the area by working to create a greater understanding of Islam. One of his personal goals, which he hopes to achieve through his role in the center, is to establish an interfaith program. “Due to the prominence of my center, I am given a golden opportunity to build a bridge with non-Muslims ... in the state of Michigan and the United States as a whole,” he said.

Already he has spoken at more than 170 colleges, universities and churches since the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. In addition, he noted that the mosque itself is located between two churches: one Armenian and the other Greek Orthodox.

In order to realize his goal of promoting interfaith understanding, he plans to create an Interfaith Liaison Department, which will spread the word of Islam, showing that it is “the word of peace, love and mutual

respect.”

Qazwini also intends to engage the community in the center’s activities. His vision is to see the ICA as more than just a place where people come to pray. Instead he “would like, for example, to see youth taking over” and using the center as their platform.

For now, the center is gaining recognition in the United States and beyond. Al-Maktoum, a charitable organization based in Dubai, donated \$700,000 to the construction of the mosque in addition to the more than \$6 million that community members gave. Moreover, this summer over 400 groups are scheduled to tour the mosque, which Qazwini refers to as “a piece of art” and the governor of Michigan calls “a jewel.”

The new Michigan mosque stands tall, visible even from airplanes flying into Detroit, but according to Qazwini, the construction of the building was only the first challenge. He now faces the task of building the community.❖

New U.S. Embassy Building Opens in Abuja

On Wednesday, July 13th, Ambassador John Campbell and General Charles E. Williams (Retired), Director and Chief Operating Officer, Overseas Buildings Operations jointly unveiled the plaque to dedicate the U.S. Mission's new chancery in Abuja the Federal Capital Territory in a ceremony that included the Nation's 229th Independence Anniversary.

Mr. Abraham Adjei Gbenda, a new American of West African origin and one of the newest members of the mission read President Bush's 2005 Independence Proclamation.

Ambassador Campbell took a moment to express condolences of the American people to those affected by the terrorist attacks in London on July 7, 2005.

The Ambassador said the new chancery building reflects and symbolizes the enriched relations between the United States and Nigeria. He said the U.S. Government's decision to build a brand new edifice is an outward and visible sign of the warm and fraternal relationship that exists between the two countries. "We enjoy a special relationship built on trust and common goals. We share so much in common, not least of which are a culture and history that have been intermingled for more than 200 years," said Ambassador Campbell.

He said the US and Nigeria shares a lot in common, including the burdens of international leadership. He said the challenges of democracy and leadership are no greater than the opportunities. "If Nigeria's 2007 elections are a success, they will demonstrate to the world Nigeria's capacity to forge a consensus among its diverse ethnic, religious, cultural and linguistic people through democratic practices. They would solidify Nigeria's democratic aspirations and



Photos: Top, the new U.S. Embassy building in Abuja
Inset; Ambassador Campbell (l) assists General Williams to unveil the plaque
Bottom, Ambassador Campbell (c) joins General Williams (l) to welcome House of Representative Speaker Aminu Masari.



further institutionalize democracy as the preferred form of government in this remarkable land, he advised.

The Independence Anniversary and new chancery dedication ceremony were attended by some

current and past Nigerian leaders, top Nigerian government officials and legislators, the diplomatic community, international business leaders, community and religious leaders.❖



Consulate General of the United States of America
Public Affairs Section
2, Broad Street
P.O. Box 554 Lagos - Nigeria
Tel.: 01-2632577, 2633560, 2633395
Visit our Website at <http://nigeria.usembassy.gov/>

or

Embassy of the United States of America
Public Affairs Section
7, Mambilla Street
Maitama District,
P.O. Box 5760
Garki, Abuja
Tel.: 09-523-5226/7

CROSSROADS is published bi-monthly by the Public Affairs Section, U.S. Embassy, Nigeria. Address all correspondence to the Information Office, 2 Broad Street, Lagos. Telephone: (01)263-2504, 263-3713, 263-5397; Fax: 01-263-5397

Editorial Team: CLAUDIA ANYASO (Country Public Affairs Officer), ATIMENEIDA GEORGE (Public Affairs Officer), RUDY STEWART (Information Officer), IDIKA U. ONYUKWU (Editor).

E-mail us at: crossroads@state.gov or visit our Website at: <http://nigeria.usembassy.gov/>

August		CALENDAR OF EVENTS						
		Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2 Media Briefing (Lagos)	3 U.S. study classes (Lagos and Abuja)	4 Media Briefing (Abuja)	5	6
		7	8	9 Media Briefing (Lagos)	10 U.S. study classes (Lagos and Abuja)	11 Media Briefing (Abuja)	12	13
		14	15	16 Media Briefing (Lagos)	17 U.S. study classes (Lagos and Abuja)	18 Media Briefing (Abuja)	19	20
		21	22	23 Media Briefing (Lagos)	24 U.S. study classes (Lagos and Abuja)	25 Media Briefing (Abuja)	26	27
2005		28	29	30 Media Briefing (Lagos)	31 U.S. study classes (Lagos and Abuja)			

Please note that ALL events on this calendar are STRICTLY by invitation. For enquiries please call the telephone numbers listed above.